

# Politics of Naturalism, or Zola's Performative and Literary Responses to Anarchistic Life Forces in *Le Docteur Pascal* and *Les Rougon-Macquart*

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## RÉSUMÉ

*Cet essai se propose d'explorer les implications politiques du naturalisme de Zola. À partir de l'examen des commentaires de nature ouvertement politique que l'écrivain adresse à l'encontre des nihilistes et anarchistes russes, nous explorerons les réflexions littéraires qu'une telle problématique historique fait naître chez ce romancier et nous analyserons la façon dont ce dernier met à contribution ces récits littéraires pour résoudre ces problèmes historiques. Nous accorderons une attention toute particulière au roman *Le Docteur Pascal* ainsi qu'à quelques autres textes écrits à la même période aux fins de conclure que Zola parvient à inventer des possibilités de capacités humaines à la fois plus fraternelles et presque utopiques sans toutefois briser la logique naturaliste de la fiction historique.*

In “La République et la littérature,” Zola famously claimed: “La République sera naturaliste ou elle ne sera pas.”<sup>1</sup> For Zola, naturalism is more than an aesthetic doctrine about scientific observation and literary experimentation; predicated on secular epistemology which rejects the religious security and metaphysical assurance of transcendence, his positivist naturalism refuses to be reduced to one single field. But if Zola's naturalism should be understood as an intersection of multiple intellectual and artistic tendencies, one may rightly wonder whether it has political implications or not, since the above quote apparently suggests the political applicability of naturalism. This is far from a simple question, because the naturalist author asserts at the very beginning of the same essay that he shies away from the political world. However, he also maintains that if literature has to become scientific in the modern times, so do politics, thus establishing some sort of parallelism between literature and politics by means of science.

Given this ambiguous, almost confusing, relationship between literature, science, and politics under the same slogan of naturalism, it is important to note that Zola defines politics from two perspectives, or in terms of analysis and management of contemporary reality; however, these two perspectives are yet in essence one and the same thing, because, as he states, both must be naturalist and thus free from personal preference and ideological commitment. Put differently, the naturalist author attempts to separate our wishful thinking from objective observation of existing material and spiritual tendencies and conditions, condemning the former and insisting that the latter determine what would be the most appropriate and most efficient here and now.

Thus, in “La République en Russie,” which was written around the same period, Zola relates politics to gardening, maintaining that politics must become an applied science.<sup>2</sup> For him, the question of government must be addressed disinterestedly and objectively, because things and

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<sup>1</sup> Émile Zola, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 10 (Paris: Cercle du livre précieux, 1966) 1380. Thereafter abbreviated as *OC*, with volume number and page number.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Figaro* 21 March 1881.

beings are not malleable materials that can be subordinated to our arbitrary will or romantic fancies; like gardeners who are not completely free to design a garden and thus have to work with what is available under certain unchangeable conditions, conceding to natural laws, the naturalist must take into account the existing circumstances, their facts and laws, which allow him to detect which option is most available. Zola therefore criticizes the Russian nihilists for their recklessness and hastiness, because they fail to bridge the material and spiritual conditions of Russia with their own political end, hoping to make their dream come true, rather than having the historical reality ripe for it. What is ironic here is that they were drawn to such a false solution, not because of their romantic idealization of Russian reality, but because of their correct observation of Russian conditions: for instance, the dispersed population of uneducated, superstitious, and religious peasants. The nihilists had recourse to the mystic, apocalyptic, Bakuninist method of creative destruction, precisely because of their realistic observation of the absence of a practical means of political mobilization. In a sense, the Russian nihilists were naturalists in terms of epistemology and analysis, but not so in terms of practices and strategies. Zola's final verdict is thus rather categorical: one must adhere to the naturalist approach, whether it is about writing fiction or involving oneself in politics, because otherwise one is destined to failure.

However, Zola's sectarian insistence on naturalist orthodoxy, on the coincidence of theory and practice and on rejection of wishful thinking, underwent transformation toward the end of the nineteenth century, showing some discrepancies and inconsistencies, as Zola became aware and appreciative of unsettling and uncertain tendencies and occurrences at the turn of the twentieth century. However, this transformation has been interpreted rather negatively, as if Zola contradicted himself and gave up naturalist rigour in favour of affective ardour, retreating into politically conservative positions. Contextualizing the last volume in the intellectual climate at the turn of the twentieth century, Rita Schober criticizes Zola's appropriation of religious rhetoric in *Le Docteur Pascal*, saying that it is an inadequate response to the socio-historical problems which Zola's intellect failed to penetrate: instead of tackling the fundamental question of the connections between nature and society, natural history and human history, evolution and revolution, Zola too easily escaped to "la prédication d'idéaux sympathiques."<sup>3</sup> Françoise Gaillard goes so far as to problematize the ideological implications of nineteenth-century science itself. Gaillard maintains that by appropriating the contemporary scientific discourse on heredity, Zola became complicit with its political conservatism, inadvertently reinforcing the status quo. The problem lies in the danger that hereditary science would legitimate biological differences, valorize them in a hierarchical manner, and authorize the political power to be subservient to the scientifically established biological order, in an even more repressive and deterministic way than the order of the Ancien Régime whose authority derived from tradition and religion.<sup>4</sup> Following Gaillard, it may be argued that what Schober observes in *Le Docteur Pascal* is not at all new but always inherent in naturalism and that the ideological underpinnings of naturalism manifest themselves as a problem in Zola's fiction of science only toward the end of *Les Rougon-Macquart*. However, this essay would like to propose a different reading of the problematics of the politics of naturalism, or its complexifying integration of politics, science, and aesthetics. Here, my goal is not to indicate their inner contradictions, for which the political consequence would be repressive, but rather to appreciate Zola's novelistic appropriation of hereditary science and discover certain liberating forces that would subvert the existing biological and political hierarchy.

<sup>3</sup> Françoise Gaillard, "Le Docteur Pascal ou le sens de la vie," *Les Cahiers naturalistes* 53 (1979): 74.

<sup>4</sup> Françoise Gaillard, "Genèse et généalogie: le cas du *Docteur Pascal*," *Romantisme* 11.31 (1981): 192-94.

In this respect, it is important to remember that, as an historical novelistic series, *Les Rougon-Macquart* is far less monolithic and more unsettling than a first reading would reveal, traversed as it is by various kinds of *temporal* and narrative discrepancies. It has been observed that Zola commits anachronistic errors in several volumes of the cycle.<sup>5</sup> But does this mean that the naturalist author was unaware of them, that they should be regarded as careless mistakes on his part? What becomes clear is that it is not a question of factual mistakes but of properly literary problems: namely, gaps and fissures between what history tells and what fiction narrates, between what the novels officially claim to present (the Second Empire) and what they can only imply (the Third Republic). Then, is it not more productive to argue that the naturalist author takes advantage of these temporal disparities as a creative moment to superimpose two histories or referents, the past and the present, the Second Empire and the Third Republic? Is it not possible to imagine that his historical novels intentionally confuse them with each other, effacing the latter as much as they re-inscribed it into the former, both of which would become fictional, while still being tied to the historical? Put differently, the historical dimension of *Les Rougon-Macquart* is not simply referential in multiple ways, but also mediated by multiple intentions and traversed by cracks and fissures, and it is exactly into this porous imbrication of the historical and the fictional that Zola has inserted other narrative ends that are not wholly contained by the avowed ones.<sup>6</sup>

If, in the fictional universe of *Les Rougon-Macquart*, the social and the historical are not a passive background, the physiological and the hereditary are not deterministic in the sense of eternal, permanent, and transhistorical forces either. From Zola's preparatory notes for the series, one can observe how Zola's historical sense intensified as his literary project unfolded along multiple lines and ensembles, from the materialist flatness or the two-dimensionality of temperament and environment in the 1868 preface to the second edition of *Thérèse Raquin*, to the mutual shaping of the biological and the modern in "Notes générales sur la marche de l'œuvre."<sup>7</sup> Gilles Deleuze's great contribution to Zola criticism is to complicate the biological notions of temperament and instinct, taking them for more than scientific, more than a mere borrowing from contemporary science. According to Deleuze, Zola's notion of instinct is much richer and more concrete, than

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<sup>5</sup> See Henri Mitterand, *Zola: L'Histoire et la fiction* (Paris: PUF, 1990) 29; Colette Becker (*Zola: Le Saut dans les étoiles* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de la Sorbonne nouvelle, 2002] 116-18). What is not noticed, it appears, is that the finalized versions often efface precise references to exact dates and years, despite the fact that the preparatory notes register them clearly. For instance, in such notes, usually called "plan général" or "plan détaillé," which outline chapter division, Zola overtly indicates the date and duration of each chapter. Those notes reveal that the first chapter of *Le Docteur Pascal* is set in July 1872 and the last in July or August 1874 (*Les Rougon-Macquart. Histoire naturelle et sociale d'une famille sous le Second Empire*, vol. 5 [Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1960] 1604-06), thereafter abbreviated as *RM*, with a volume number and a page number. However, these years are not mentioned in the finished text, while the passing of time is indicated as seasonal changes. Concerning the case of *Germinal*, see Eduardo Febles, *Explosive Narratives: Terrorism and Anarchy in the Works of Emile Zola* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010) 35, 37 n. 8. Robert H. McCormick discusses the issue of socialism in *Germinal* and *La Terre*, in relation to Jules Guesdes who was one of Zola's informants ("Zola, Jules Guesde et La Question Sociale," in *Zola sans frontières: Actes du colloque international de Strasbourg [Mai 1994]*, ed. Auguste Dezalay [Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 1996] 85-92).

<sup>6</sup> About this sort of effacement which paradoxically underscores the process of historical registration, see Barbara Johnson's discussion of Mallarmé's treatment of the Panama scandal in *A World of Difference* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987) 57-67.

<sup>7</sup> Concerning these preparatory notes for *Les Rougon-Macquart*, see "Appendice" in *RM* 5,1667-76. Mitterand offers a few different hypotheses on the chronological order of these notes, but the lack of positive evidence makes it difficult to settle the question definitively. See *Zola, L'Histoire et la fiction* 13-38 and *Le Roman à l'œuvre: Genèse et valeurs* (Paris: PUF, 1998) 13-21.

even “une notion de roman.”<sup>8</sup> In Zola, instincts are transformed into certain propensities, tendencies, orientations, and dispositions, which, being physiologically specific but unspecified in socio-historical terms, indicate certain genres of life; however, each volume always differentiates, particularizes, and actualizes the generic into the singular by making a narrative account of such singular encounters of such biologically constituted characters with concrete socio-historical objects.

Zola's literary problem can be formulated in the following ways: on the one hand, there is the question of how to develop historical narratives without transgressing the historical logic appropriate to the genre of the historical novel conceived in scientific or experimental terms, without destroying referential functions; on the other hand, there is the puzzle of how can this be done without simply refusing potentially pessimistic and ugly truths about the bestiality of humanity, drawn from a scientific understanding of living organisms. In a word, the question is how to be historical and more than historical, be scientific and more than scientific, acknowledging such lower, bodily and corporeal drives, the impulsive and the instinctive which nineteenth-century positivism, medical science, and the theory of heredity and evolution revealed only too clearly, but without finding oneself completely limited by such scientific articulations. How could Zola propose a literary solution to these problems?

To further complicate this argument, it is fundamental to reread the last few volumes of the cycle with this problematic in mind. In this context, *Le Docteur Pascal* deserves special attention, as it is not simply the final installment of the twenty-volume series, but also the conclusion which enfolds and unfolds the whole history of the degenerating family tainted with hereditary defects, where the author reveals the theoretical foundations for the entire series. The self-referential tendency thus renders this volume closer to the genre of meta-fiction.<sup>9</sup> It does not, however, simply refer back to the past or to past volumes, whether it is the Second Empire the cycle transforms into narrative or the Third Republic during which Zola kept writing the novels. In *Le Docteur Pascal*, the end of the cycle, 1873 (narrative time), is suddenly channeled into 1893 (the time of narration), where the text resonates with various echoes of the fin-de-siècle problematics, especially the negative aspects, such as physical and mental degeneration, aesthetic decadence, Schopenhauerian pessimism, mysticism and religious conservatism, decreasing population and feminization of race and nation, impatience and dissatisfaction with science and progress.<sup>10</sup> The text does not refer so much to either of the historical realities independently as it constructs a singular ensemble of these two histories and stories, and it is through these literary and

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<sup>8</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du sens* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1969) 374. Deleuze thus emphasizes that this biological-literary device is, contrary to the common criticism of the deterministic nature of naturalism, less repressive than creative: the crack is “le dieu épique pour l'histoire des instincts” (386). Deleuze adds that in Zola the encounter of an instinct with an object does not form a sentiment but a fixed idea: what takes place in Zola's naturalism is a narrative machine or mechanism that seeks not for psychological verisimilitude or vraisemblance, but for double registration of drama and epos, of historical forces and epic ones, of concrete singularity and meta-disposition (375, 78, 84).

<sup>9</sup> As Mitterand suggests, the “experimental” nature of Zola's fiction is double: one is the sense Zola intended in that infamous essay, “Le Roman expérimental,” or an “observation provoquée [provoked observation]” in a laboratory and its application to literature; and the other is a literary experiment on paper (*Le Docteur Pascal*, ed. Henri Mitterand [Paris: Gallimard, 1993] 44-45). Susan Harrow explores the latter, literary meaning of experiment, examining “the supposed discrepancy between thematic modernity (embraced by Zola) and the practice of literary modernism (assumed to be absent in Zola's writing).” See *Zola, the Body Modern: Pressures and Prospects of Representation* (London: Legenda, 2010) 5.

<sup>10</sup> Max Nordau's best-seller, *Degeneration*, includes a chapter on Zola and realism, accusing him of sensualism, plagiarism, mediocrity, etc. See Daniel Pick, “Zola's Prognosis” in *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c.1848-c.1918* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 74-97. For the general historical background of *Le Docteur Pascal*, see Schober 54-57 and Mitterand, *Fiction and Modernity*, trans. David Baguley and Monica Lebron (London: The Émile Zola Society, 2000) 123-28. Zola's secularist critique of Catholicism is discussed in *Zola et les historiens*, ed. Michèle Sacquin (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2004) 45-75.

fictional conjunctures of different times and tendencies that certain wishful thoughts and utopian images arise.

In *Émile Zola au pays de l'anarchie*, Vittorio Frigerio offers a representative selection of turn-of-the-century anarchists' articles that are directly about Zola or indirectly relevant to the naturalist novelist. According to Frigerio's informative preface, anarchists in late nineteenth-century France posthumously sent homages and tributes to Zola, seeing in him "un sympathisant indépendant, un compagnon de route, une puissance, en tout cas, avec laquelle il faut compter et dont l'influence considérable auprès de l'opinion peut contribuer à une évolution sociale fondamentalement libertaire."<sup>11</sup> However, this retrospective admiration does not mean that Zola was an anarchist. Frigerio suggests that Zola's knowledge of anarchism remained second-hand at the best, and he seemed to have read only one text by Peter Kropotkin, "L'Anarchie," very quickly around 1898 when preparing for *Paris*.<sup>12</sup>

Zola scholars tend to discount Zola's interest in socialism. In an interview which appeared in *La Lanterne*, January 8, 1887, Zola claimed that he was not interested in socialist doctrines but in "les aspirations de la foule vers un idéal de justice," and still identified himself as a socialist in that he believed that society must experience a "bouleversement profond."<sup>13</sup> Referring to this interview, *Dictionnaire d'Émile Zola* concludes, rather disparagingly, that Zola's socialism has its origins in an adolescent mindset:

[C'est] un socialisme de cœur, qui se satisfait, depuis son adolescence, de grands mots porteurs, tels: liberté, justice, fraternité, paix. De plus en plus effrayé par les tensions qui agitent la société de son temps, il se réfugie dans l'utopie d'une réforme sociale effectuée en douceur, par le progrès et l'intelligence. (394)

Is it true that Zola's sincerity, his interest and belief in "the popular aspiration for an ideal of justice" are dubious and ultimately vacuous, as they are a product of romantic enthusiasm or reformist cowardice?

This affective stance on social evil and justice is precisely the way Zola grasps social questions, and it is through this rigorously affective, somewhat romantic path that utopian images and possibilities emerge in Zola's texts. In truth, this sympathetic attitude toward political radicals persists in Zola from the early 1880s, when he wrote an essay on Russian nihilists, through the mid-1880s (at the time of *Germinal* where Souvarine, a Russian nihilist-anarchist, a disciple and believer of Bakuninist creative destruction, explodes a mine with a bomb), to the early 1890s (at the time of *Le Docteur Pascal*). In the last decade of the nineteenth century, haunted by anarchist violence, Zola responded to an interviewer, rather provocatively, that the anarchists were "sincères" and therefore should be compared to "poètes."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Vittorio Frigerio, *Émile Zola au pays de l'anarchie* (Grenoble: ELLUG Université Stendhal, 2006) 45.

<sup>12</sup> Frigerio 20. Zola would take notes on Kropotkin when preparing for *Travail* (I appreciate Vittorio Frigerio for reminding me of this point).

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in *Dictionnaire d'Émile Zola: Sa vie, son œuvre, son époque, suivi du dictionnaire des Rougon-Macquart et des catalogues des ventes après décès des biens de Zola*, eds. Colette Becker, Gina Gourdin-Servenière, and Véronique Lavielle (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1993) 393.

<sup>14</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 1892. A strangely truncated excerpt of this article is collected in *Entretiens avec Zola*, eds. Dorothy E. Speirs and Dolores A. Signori (Ottawa: Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1990) 90-91. Here, I quote from the original *Figaro* article which is available online at Gallica. Eduardo Febles provides a chronology of major anarchist attacks in France from 1892 to 94 (12-13). The bombs by Ravachol, Vaillant, and Emile Henry are well-known. According to Eugen Weber, these violent deeds discontinued after the *lois scélérates* passed following President Carnot's assassination and the executions of the anarchist criminals (*France, Fin de Siècle* [Cambridge, USA: Belknap Press, 1986] 115-20).



The anarchist problematics of this period have been discussed only partially both in Zola scholarship and in literary studies. With more sophisticated approaches than merely focusing on anarchist characters in literary texts, anarchist influences and resonances have been discovered in such cultural intercourses like translations and little magazines, whereas anarchist violence has been explored in relation to the (im)possibility of representation.<sup>15</sup> However, these scholarly discussions tend to misrepresent anarchism by foregrounding the question of representing what resists being signified, or by paying too much attention to the violent aspect of anarchism which is only a minor fraction of diverse, multiple, heterogeneous, and rhizomatic anarchist thoughts and practices at that time. These partial approaches, too formal or too sensationalist, fail to consider constructive and imaginative, even if not quite practical, endeavors and aspirations, passions and affects in turn-of-the-century anarchism. Recently, Eduardo Febles's *Explosive Narratives* takes up Eisenzweig's discussion of anarchist violence and representation, exploring overtly anarchist motifs in Zola's novels, but his understanding of anarchism is essentially second-hand and ends up repeating those biases. I would like to explore other ways that do not reduce anarchism to such aggressive images of terror and bombing, revisiting Zola's commentary on anarchists, found in interviews and journalistic pieces, to discover "the image of an anarchist Zola which he doesn't know himself"<sup>16</sup>

The interview conducted by Jean Carrère, mentioned above, is worthy of attention despite its brevity, because it summarizes Zola's peculiar idea of anarchism which is not irrelevant to his own idea of social reform and regeneration. At the beginning of the interview, Zola divides anarchists into two groups: one includes those who are trouble-makers for the sake of trouble, and states that it is law enforcement's duty to deal with such people; the other group is made up of sincere people who are really troubled by the existing inequality and injustices, unable to blind themselves to social evils now revealed only too clearly. And it is this second group that interests him.

For Zola, these sincere anarchists do not constitute a modern phenomenon. They are as old as, for example, evil and pain, all of which emerged with human society itself. And they should be understood as an angry reaction to the social order whose conventions function to block natural potentials; as the social order inevitably produces wrongs, Zola addresses them as "hommes simples, épris du songe d'un bonheur sans mélange [...] sincèrement convaincus de la possibilité d'un paradis terrestre."<sup>17</sup> However, he continues his remonstrances, since their genuine desires and impulses were becoming ever more intense and ardent at this very historical moment, because now he recognizes that he and his contemporaries are "à la fin des civilisations, au moment où un monde à son déclin va faire place à un monde nouveau."<sup>18</sup> Put another way, the present is a time of trouble where social evils and wrongs are no longer hidden and social conventions exert harmful influences.<sup>19</sup>

In this historical conjuncture, those sincere and simple people are so much "blessés, dans leur âme véritablement bonne" that they have become "des déséquilibrés."<sup>20</sup> For them, the fundamental

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<sup>15</sup> Two notable examples are Julia Kristeva, *La Révolution du langage poétique. L'Avant-garde à la fin du XIXe siècle, Lautréamont et Mallarmé* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1974) and Uri Eisenzweig, *Fictions de l'anarchisme* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 2001).

<sup>16</sup> Frigerio 28.

<sup>17</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 25 1892.

<sup>18</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 25 1892.

<sup>19</sup> Zola famously described modern times as troublesome, making this view central to *Les Rougon-Macquart*: "Le moment est trouble. C'est le trouble du moment que je peins" (*Les Manuscrits et les dessins de Zola: Les Racines d'une œuvre*, ed. Henri Mitterand [Paris: Textuel, 2002] 272).

<sup>20</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 25 1892.

failure of the present society is to be found in the social structure itself. They are both impatient and disinterested, not simply sentimental or irrational, as their dispositional derangement is not immanent or merely psychological, but rather social and historical – the result of and reaction to the world of here and now. About a decade earlier, Zola characterized Russian nihilists in a similar way, depicting them as neither perverse nor mad, but instead intelligent enough to recognize the societal predicaments in Russia. Thus, these anarchists are daydreamers of a future unqualified happiness; they are “les chercheurs de mieux.”<sup>21</sup> The trouble is that both nihilists and anarchists are neither malicious nor silly: their use of desperate and violent means is the result of sound observation and serious consideration; and the more sincere they are and the more beautiful their vision is, the more unbridgeable the gap between their dream and their observed reality, as well as their willingness to use whatever means would become more fierce. As in the case of the Russian nihilists, the sincerity of those anarchists would only intensify their radicalism. Those imbalanced seekers are afflicted by the discrepancy between the present state of the things and their anonymous and disinterested desire for human happiness, to the point of taking a somewhat primitivistic, Rousseau-esque either/or position, *either* the absolute necessity of destruction *or* the perpetuation of the evil: “Et plus leur rêve était beau, plus leur désir de bonheur humain était intense, plus ardemment ils proclamaient la nécessité de démolir.”<sup>22</sup> Therefore, Zola continues that their constructive passion and desire would only produce social cacophony, leading to an intransigent path: “tuer l’effet en tuant la cause, c’est-à-dire supprimer le mal en supprimant la société qui l’engendre.”<sup>23</sup> Zola seems to say that what is wrong with anarchists is not their hearts but their strategies.

Now, we can better understand why Zola characterizes anarchist desires as “l’éternelle poésie noire.”<sup>24</sup> According to the naturalist novelist, the ominous darkness of their aspirational dream resides not in their utopian impulse for human happiness, or “une bonté impulsive et inconsciente,” but in the ways in which they wish to achieve this good on earth, too rapidly, too hastily, too recklessly, going against the way of the world and believing that the world should surrender to their poetry.<sup>25</sup> The trouble for Zola, and for all of society, is that however impatient and aggressive, this “impulsive and unconscious goodness” cannot simply be rejected, not only because the aspiration of the anarchists is real and visceral, but also because they are not entirely wrong and their vision is not wholly bad.<sup>26</sup> How then does Zola propose to suture this ever-widening gap between dream and reality, when he does not disagree with the dreamer’s diagnosis of modern times and yet rejects their apocalyptic prescription?<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 1892.

<sup>22</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 1892.

<sup>23</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 1892.

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<sup>25</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 1892.

<sup>26</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 1892.

<sup>27</sup> Carmen Mayer-Robin might disagree on this point. See “‘L’heureuse aurore prochaine’: From Narrative Vision in Émile Zola’s *Travail* (1901) to Filmic Utopia in Henri Pouctal’s Silent Film Adaptation (1920)” *Dix-Neuf* 18.2 (2014): 150-68 (thanks to Vittorio Frigerio for reminding me of this article). However, I would like to suggest that although apocalyptic scenes often appear in the second half of *Les Rougon-Macquart* – two most notable examples are the explosion of the mine by a Russian nihilist-anarchist in *Germinal* and Paris set on fire during the Commune in *La Débâcle* – it is not with mimetic descriptions of such destructive occurrences as such, but rather with the characters’ reflections on them that Zola’s narratives conclude; and even more importantly, in such climactic moments, the narrative voice becomes so intermingled with the characters’ voices that it is almost impossible to separate them one from the other and to determine which voice is dominant, a narrative situation which complicates interpreting the resolution of the series. Put differently, the apocalyptic might function as a resolving moment in a plot, without becoming the

Given his rather sympathetic attitude to the nihilists and the anarchists, Zola's solutions are quite disappointing, as they are only deduced from the naturalist orthodoxy. As in his earlier essay on Russia, Zola's criticism of the anarchists boils down to their erroneous use or abuse of scientific authority (factual error) and to their failure in recognizing that their violent means were unfit for their purposes at that historical moment – a strategic mistake. Zola's conclusion is that the anarchists were short-sighted and unable to see that reality was unripe for their endeavors, which they might have understood with properly scientific reason and sound patience: we could not “brûler les étapes” to immediately arrive at the desired end, for each step must be guided by “une poussée fatale.”<sup>28</sup> One may rightly ask: what should we do with anarchist impatience, with their emotional and visceral impulses which are also undeniable facts and therefore true and genuine in their own right? How can science be a remedy for such an affective state? To explore this question further, it is necessary to look at other texts that are contemporaneous with *Le Docteur Pascal*.

Zola delivered a speech at l'Association générale des étudiants de Paris, just after he finished writing *Le Docteur Pascal*, which Henri Mitterand says is “le meilleur commentaire du *Docteur Pascal*” (RM 5:1609). Taking up Zola's own words, *Le Gaulois*, a Parisian newspaper, reports this lecture as “un raccourci du dernier chapitre du *Docteur Pascal*, qui n'est, lui aussi, qu'un long cri d'amour en l'honneur de la science” (RM 5:1609).<sup>29</sup> Here, Zola's words are exactly Pascal's, as if he had transcribed phrases and sentences from the novel, and the naturalist author speaks in an autobiographical, often confessional manner, relating his adoration of life to his unflinching support for positivist science and then connecting both of them to his faith in work.

Several tendencies and orientations overlap and intersect. Zola's faith in ever-reproducing and ever-regenerating life goes beyond human affairs, encompassing both “les choses et les êtres” and leading to his ethics of work that functions as a sound regulator in this anarchic ocean of life forces which the scientific attitude confronts infinitely and endlessly (RM 5, 1615). If Zola's vitalism, or his unflinching faith in life forces and his indiscriminate love of living organisms and their phenomena, is his worldview, his faith in work is his ethics, while positivism, induction, and hereditary science are analytical and productive tools with which work affects life and the world. Zola's three-fold faith can be mapped out in a slightly different way as follows: natural life is torrential and almost anarchistic, continuously reproducing itself beyond good and evil, regardless of human wishes and concerns; positivist science is gradual and endless enhancement of knowledge which, precisely because of the infinity of its object, remains incomplete; and

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ultimate destination of the cycle. And this very discrepancy between the end of a story and that of a text seems to beg us to pay close attention to the textuality and performativity of Zola's narratives beyond their semantic content.

<sup>28</sup> *Le Figaro* 25 April 1892.

<sup>29</sup> Mitterand quotes the whole speech in the note section of the Pléiade edition, which suggests how important he thinks this text is, given that he rarely cites longer notes and texts in their entirety. The same text is collected in *OC* 10, 677-83. It seems to me that this text resonates with another text Zola wrote for a younger audience, not simply because they are both addressed to young people, but also because each of them discusses the problems of science. In “Lettre à la jeunesse,” written in 1879, Zola talks about the problem of the unknown, whether it is an unexplored territory that shall be conquered later or a romantic retreat where one dreams freely, and Zola condemns Renan to the latter category, while praising Claude Bernard for taking the first path (*OC* 10, 1215). In the same text, Zola argues that science and poetry are continuous: “La science est donc, à vrai dire, de la poésie expliquée; le savant est un poète qui remplace les hypothèses de l'imagination par l'étude exacte des choses et des êtres” (*OC* 10, 1222). In other words, Zola does not object to the continuity of science and poetry, but to their confusion or misrecognition. Renan's error is not necessarily that he retreated into the romantic position, but rather that he nevertheless claimed to be scientific despite such an un-scientific, poetic retreat. Just as he criticizes the anarchists for their misuse or abuse of science, Zola reproaches Renan for his illegitimate and false use of scientific authority.



work is a regulating yet encouraging habit in the face of these infinite natural forces and never-ending human efforts. The point here is that all these three are progressively directional without ontologically definitive ends.

Considering the anarchist vocabulary and the problematics outlined above, this triple conjunction might be translated in the following way: science has tried to appropriate life forces for a long time, but it has now become undeniable that they are overflowing and overwhelming and that science cannot grasp them once and for all. Impatient people can no longer bear this eternally suspended state of anxiety brought upon them by science in its shattering of religious certainty. They have become aware of the unbridgeable gap between reality and science, between elusive life forces and ever failing comprehension, between unending knowing and impossible understanding. Because they lose their balance, these impatient people would recklessly flee from reason to intuition, religion, mysticism, or whatever would promise immediate access to the enigma of our life and existence. Confronted with the devastating desperation of such sincere people, hard-core positivists nevertheless stay committed to the old way, patiently continuing the slow and gradual acquisition of knowledge all the while accepting that this quest will never attain omnipotence; at the same time, those secular intellectuals propose a private and humble way to manage this general disturbance, namely, to make an effort to organize their lives and the world by working incessantly for their improvement.

Zola thus frankly admits the contemporary disillusionment with science, conceding that science can no longer be inspirational and that its slow and gradual progress will not be victorious over immediate and instantaneous intuition or revelation. What Zola problematizes here is not necessarily the youth's proclivity for Schopenhauerian pessimism. If the youth had lost positivist certainty, if they were drawn to the whimsical and the fanciful, refusing to bear the burden of the disenchanted reality and embracing the ignorant happiness of believing, the blame was on science's incapacity, or its postponed and unaccomplished promise: "la science est incapable de repeupler le ciel qu'elle a vidé, de rendre le Bonheur aux âmes dont elle a ravagé la paix naïve" (*RM* 5, 1612).<sup>30</sup> In other words, science disclosed disturbing gaps between the known and the unknown, the knowable and the unknowable, smashing religious comfort, while offering no alternative.

Zola's solution to the spiritual disorientation of young people and their intellectual regression to mysticism is reminiscent of his response to anarchist derangement, but much more elaborated and thorough. Following Ernest Renan, Zola (re)confirms his positivist and rationalist belief in human progress, but bravely concedes that scientific truths would always fall short, failing to bring about happiness:

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<sup>30</sup> Zola's observation of this spiritual emptiness at the turn of the nineteenth century is comparable to Nietzsche's diagnosis of ascetic ideals in nineteenth-century Europe, discussed in *Genealogy of Morals*: one prefers to will something, or even will "nothing," rather than not will at all, rather than stop willing: "[human will] needs a goal – and it will rather will nothingness than not will [...] any meaning is better than none at all; the ascetic ideal was in every sense the 'faute de mieux' par excellence so far" (*Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. Walter Kaufmann [New York: Modern Library, 1968] 533, 598). What is criticized in both Zola and Nietzsche is the presupposition and assumption of the existence of another world other than this world, and the valorization of something metaphysical or transcendental over the material and the sensuous. The problem here is not simply what reality is, but more significantly what relations and attitudes we should construct within and against reality. Both Zola and Nietzsche suggest that the way-out from this duality must be sought on earth: this world must be our affair, and no other space is for our living and thinking.

L'avenir de l'humanité est dans le progrès de la raison par la science. Le seul instrument de connaissance est la science inductive [...]. La poursuite de la vérité par la science est l'idéal divin que l'homme doit se proposer. Tout est illusion et vanité, sauf le trésor de vérités scientifiques lentement acquises et qui ne se perdront plus jamais. Augmentées par la suite, elles donneront à l'homme un pouvoir incalculable, et la sérénité, sinon le bonheur. (*RM* 5,1600)<sup>31</sup>

A decade ago, he could have imposed on the public an almost threatening either/or choice: “La République sera naturaliste ou elle ne sera pas” (*OC* 10:1380). Now, Zola admits twice that a dogmatic or “sectaire” (re)assertion of positivism as in his youth cannot be a solution to the anxious uncertainty of the youth around him (*RM* 5, 1611, 1614). Despite his certainty that his naturalist, scientific, and democratic orientation would usher in the next century, he understood that science alone could not be enough and that we can never reach the state of omnipotence. Zola thus moves away from the determinist rigor and, as Rita Schober points out, enters a personal and subjective realm (59).

To become subjective and personal does not mean to disregard public truth, however. Rather, it seems that Zola deliberately displaces his epistemological position from inductive certainty to a weaker, uncertain horizon, not because he realizes that his positivist perspective is untrue or unreliable; he makes this move because he feels that no perspective can be claimed absolute of itself and that one needs other grounds to justify one's own perspective, unless one has recourse to metaphysical or theological authority. Here, Zola attempts to combine sound agnosticism with scientific enlightenment without diluting either. For him, the will to knowledge is something mankind raises to/for himself: it is both compulsory as well as self-imposed, just as the positivism expressed here is aware of its own groundlessness and therefore of the necessity of self-grounding; and such grounding acts derive their justification not necessarily from already acquired scientific truths, but from their *pursuit* as such which would become “l'idéal divin” of humanity. According to Renan-Zola, the future of humanity lies in the constant advancement of science and reason that ever increases our knowledge, even if this gradual progression does not bring about a utopia itself but only its approximation, or more precisely, a never-ending, open-ended march and search for it.

But how could we keep ourselves committed to this infinite and endless task, if and when such a task does not bring about easily recognizable material gains or spiritual satisfaction? What keeps us courageous enough to live without absolute certainty about our end, or only with an end which we justify merely by positing it and trying to actualize it? The last section of the *ébauche* titled “Credo de Renan, d'après Vagüé” maintains that it is faith in life that connects science to philosophy and to ethics as well as to aesthetic production. For Zola, life is not merely a phenomenon governed by natural laws, which can be objectively observed and scientifically explained, but rather the primary force among others. But at the same time, it is not simply life as such that interests Zola; it is rather specific forms of life, articulated by hereditary science and foregrounded by narratives of reproduction and continuation that are important to Zola's thinking. Zola's vitalistic philosophy therefore considers that life is the most fundamental construct, whereas heredity is “un mouvement communiqué” which functions both as a scientific theory and as an artistic instrument (*RM* 5, 1610).

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<sup>31</sup>Zola was greatly influenced by Vagüé's essay, “Après M. Renan,” which appeared in the November 15, 1892 issue of *La Revue des deux mondes*, shortly after Renan's death. Zola carefully read it and copied Vagüé's conclusion on Renan, developing his own thoughts in the last pages of the *ébauche*, which would constitute “le credo de Pascal” and become the “résumé philosophique de toute ma série.” For a closer and more extensive examination of Zola's engagement with Renan's texts, see Clélia C. Anfray, “Zola, lecteur de Renan” *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 38.3 (2010): 199–210.

What I am suggesting here is that in Zola, hereditary science works as a supreme fiction that is both a principle of description and an explanation: it is both a principle of creation and transformation, traversing fiction and reality alike, as much bridging them as allowing the latter to intervene in the former. Put differently, hereditary science explicates the resemblances and differences, the closeness and distance of different people, while also functioning as an aesthetic principle of unification, a guiding thread that synthesizes disparate volumes into an intertwined ensemble, an aggregate that cannot be considered a unified series unless the logic of heredity establishes and then justifies the ontological connectedness of fictional characters. But it serves more than for scientific explanation and aesthetic unification; it does intervene, correct, and even perfect, not necessarily in the real world but at least in the fictional one, especially when it emerges not simply as the architecture of the fictional world but as the very material with which to work on within it, and this very possibility of transformation lures Pascal into the dream of becoming an agent that will bring about a universal cure and happiness.<sup>32</sup>

Zola's speech and his *ébauche* thus summarize *Les Rougon-Macquart* from the philosophic and scientific perspective. What is left unresolved in this formulation is the tension between inductive science and our existence, between knowledge-truth and happiness: science might be useful and indispensable, but it is not the goal or ideal in itself; it makes us wise, but knowledge and wisdom is one thing and happiness is another, and they cannot be automatically bridged by the scientific method alone. The reporter does justice to the speech by describing it as a "cri", because Zola's speech ends with an exclamation, a plea to the young audience: "Le travail! Messieurs, mais songez donc qu'il est l'unique loi du monde, le régulateur qui mène la matière organisée à sa fin inconnue!" (*RM* 5, 1615). However, what is obvious in this passage is that this is less an affirmation of truth, but rather a performative entreaty: Zola asks the members of his audience to imagine differently and repeats "ne [...] que" and "ne pas d'autre [...] que" to make them believe that there is no alternative. If the gap between the infinity of nature or the task and finite human capacity sounds resolved here, stasis is only achieved rhetorically. And it is perhaps done too quickly and too easily, because this resolution is nothing but a cadence in a public speech. And I would like to argue that it is exactly this unresolvable tension between life and work, between the act of wishing and the wishful content, that Zola's novels attempt to resolve at the narrative level. Put differently, what his fiction stages is not merely an intellectual and epistemological understanding of nature and the world, of society and history: Zola's naturalist fiction is something more than the sensuous and physical content that can be contained within purely scientific discourse, more than the rational content which can be expressed in public speech with one single voice and one single perspective. For this reason, we turn to his novels, his fictional narratives and their literary textuality, rather than their semantic content.

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<sup>32</sup> Although it is often forgotten by those Zola scholars who endorse Pascal's authority, it is noteworthy that Pascal's goal is *not* to become god-like by possessing hereditary science and transforming humanity into a stronger race. Indeed, as the narrative continues, Pascal gives up such a reformist path of intervention, considering it too arrogant and egoistic. However, this abnegation does not lead to Schopenhauerian contemplation and silent conformism either: Pascal cannot completely abandon the dream of humanity's ultimate progress and realization of universal happiness, just as Zola never gives up such a hope based on inductive science, and there is a significant difference between simply letting life live and die on the one hand, and on the other, being willing to know the way of life and say it explicitly even if this will to knowledge and expression results in no practical consequence. And it is in this regard that the parallelism between Zola and Pascal, if any, should be detected, namely, their courageous insensitivity to hurting popular sentiments and disturbing their serenity and complacency. As I have already argued above, it is the passion for the endless pursuit of utopian life and living which *Le Docteur Pascal* justifies by creating a narrative account of Pascal's indefatigable, heroic exploration, even if it would result in multiple failures.

What I suggest is to read the *Rougon-Macquart* series, and especially the twentieth volume, as Zola's response to the anarchist problematics regarding the passionate impatience with social misery, disorder and equilibrium, idealism and science. It is worth mentioning how close Clotilde's daydreaming about possible future justice for Pascal and herself comes to the desperate anarchist craving for equity (*RM* 5, 1218). In Zola's works, the question of anarchism is represented not merely in terms of nihilist and anarchist characters like Souvarine in *Germinal*, of revolutionary practices like insurrections, labor strikes, popular mobilization, but rather in terms of aspirations and wishes for something better and for the best. In this regard, both Pascal and Clotilde are anarchists, or become so, both tend toward disequilibrium, with Clotilde possessed by such fixed ideas as mysticism and blissful happiness, and Pascal, by self-doubt regarding his hereditary constitution as well as by the impossible wish for the regeneration of the family and all of humanity. What is more remarkable is that both Clotilde and Pascal break away from such possessed states, mutually helping the other in the anarchist state and striking a proper balance within and between themselves. If the last volume represents "l'impossible quête de l'équilibre," as Colette Becker aptly suggests, the pursuit of balance, or the overcoming of anarchist derangement, seems to be achieved in anarchistic reverie and superseding it, in the birth of Pascal and Clotilde's baby, an event which may be taken as a happy culmination of those two ex-anarchists.<sup>33</sup> Annette Clamor's argument that Pascal (positivist science) is a thesis and Clotilde (religious mysticism) an antithesis, however, is too schematic (140). This sort of interpretation simply forgets that Clotilde is not the complete opposite of Pascal but a divergence from him: Clotilde is always and already Pascal's disciple who assists the master's work.<sup>34</sup> More fundamentally, such a reading forgets the ambiguity of the last volume where three stories of three characters intersect with each other – Pascal's martyrdom and cure, Félicité's conspiracy and revisionist victory, and Clotilde's education and reproduction – without definitely prioritizing one over the other.

Should we deduce that this plural registration of multiple voices is the literary conclusion of *Les Rougon-Macquart*? The narrative trajectory of *Le Docteur Pascal* inscribes various kinds of ambiguities, while being traversed by multiple failures and tragic consequences, from the deaths of Pascal's patients to that of Pascal himself to the destruction of his papers. It almost appears, however, that *Les Rougon-Macquart* is incapable of, or simply uninterested in, inventing a perfect scenario where every problem disappears. It might then be truer to say that the cycle's literary mission is not to write a happy ending but to inscribe such possibilities, hopeful but not yet known and still uncertain, across several voices and textual layers, across discursive genres and disciplinary territories.

In conclusion, this essay should therefore turn not to the ultimate end of the cycle, but to what occurs in the middle, somewhat utopian moments of generosity, sympathy, kindness, sharing, love, or friendship that the naturalist novelist invented and inserted as literary tales that are marginal and only temporary, because they would be denied by narrative closures that come later on, as affective fictions that seemingly defy the bestiality of biological forces and are yet not outside the hereditary logic of *Les Rougon Macquart*.

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<sup>33</sup> This is the subtitle Becker gives to her brief analysis of *Le Docteur Pascal*, "*Le Docteur Pascal*: autofiction: l'impossible quête de l'équilibre," *Excavatio* 4-5 (1994): 59-65.

<sup>34</sup> Troubled by the increasing gap between unsystematic scientific education by Pascal and religious education by Martine and Félicité, Clotilde confesses her inner suffering to Pascal: "Je ne suis pas une savante. Cependant, tu m'as appris beaucoup, et j'ai moi-même appris davantage, en vivant avec toi. D'ailleurs, ce sont des choses que je sens" (*RM* 5, 989).

Zola began the *Rougon-Macquart* series by considering it as a closed circle. However, what the final volume repeatedly suggests is that the narrative could not totalize itself, failing to include “tout” and thus inevitably leaving unsaid and unconnected so many things. Pascal cannot but regret that his genealogical tree omits the influence of other blood coming from outside the Rougon-Macquart family. However, while this recognition of exclusion immediately threatens the narrative unity of the biological family, it also suddenly expands in another direction, because what is omitted and separated out is still inside, and this situation enables Pascal to slide from the family story to the history of all humanity:

Mais il ne faut jamais désespérer, les familles sont l'éternel devenir. Elles plongent, au delà de l'ancêtre commun, à travers les couches insondables des races qui ont vécu, jusqu'au premier être; et elles pousseront sans fin, elles s'étaleront, se ramifieront à l'infini, au fond des âges futurs... Regarde notre Arbre: il ne compte que cinq générations, il n'a pas même l'importance d'un brin d'herbe, au milieu de la forêt humaine, colossale et noire, dont les peuples sont les grands chênes séculaires [...] Eh bien! l'espoir est là, dans la reconstitution journalière de la race par le sang nouveau qui lui vient du dehors. (*RM* 5, 1017-18)

Thus, the seeming balance gets broken, and the natural and social history of the family under the Second Empire is immediately channeled to the prehistoric beginning, or “the first being” and then to the future being that is still unknown. Interestingly, both Mitterand and Borie foreground the anthropological dimension in *Les Rougon-Macquart*.<sup>35</sup> What is intriguing about their arguments is that for Mitterand as for Borie, Zola's anthropology is less biological or scientific than mythical and poetic. However, I should add that this is not a complete transformation of the biological or scientific into the mythical or poetic: Zola makes the biological mythic and the scientific poetic, by predicating the latter on the former, but without leaving the former behind and leaping for the latter, just like Clotilde, “bonne créature simple,” who derives from Pascal or scientific education and goes beyond the point where the scholar hesitates, aspiring to what science cannot yet reveal and seeking what may never be known (*RM* 5, 1212).

One last question to ask is whether this mythical anthropology (Borie) or anthropo-mythical naturalism (Mitterand) is trapped in the Christian archetype of original sin and the Darwinian or Freudian caveman who is aggressive and barbaric, haunted by the death drive. By privileging *La Bête humaine*, Borie reinforces such narratives of sin and violence upon which Western civilization is based (58-170). However, I would like to insist that *Les Rougon-Macquart* resonates with another image of an early humanity capable of mutual aid, love, and sympathy, Zola's *as if* moments and impulses, an example of which is found in the middle of *La Débâcle*. Indeed, even if the novel as a whole narrates the ultimate failure of suturing the deep divide between the sociohistorical orientations of the two protagonists, Maurice and Jean (young/old, urban/rural, educate/uneducated, bourgeois/worker, degenerated/robust, effeminate/virile, selfish/altruistic, progressive/conservative, pro-Commune/anti-Commune), it is still capable of inscribing a less barbaric but equally ancient naturalist image of humanity. The justification for this naturalistic picture of humanity should be sought in an elaborate narrative sequence of common crises and mutual hardships, in the literal and metaphorical aspects of their becoming-twins, as well as in the sheer performative force of the text that is yet less assertive than humble and somewhat self-doubting, with the insertion of “peut-être” and the question mark:

<sup>35</sup> See Mitterand, *Fiction and Modernity* 135 and Jean Borie, *Zola et les mythes ou De la nausée au salut* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1971) 60.



Maurice s'abandonna à son bras, se laissa emporter comme un enfant. Jamais bras de femme ne lui avait tenu aussi chaud au cœur. Dans l'écroulement de tout, au milieu de cette misère extrême, avec la mort en face, cela était pour lui d'un réconfort délicieux, de sentir un être l'aimer et le soigner; et peut-être l'idée que ce cœur tout à lui était celui d'un simple, d'un paysan resté près de la terre, dont il avait eu d'abord la répugnance, ajoutait-elle maintenant à sa gratitude une douceur infinie. N'était-ce point la fraternité des premiers jours du monde, l'amitié avant toute culture et toutes classes, cette amitié de deux hommes unis et confondus, dans leur commun besoin d'assistance, devant la menace de la nature ennemie? Il entendait battre son humanité dans la poitrine de Jean, et il était fier pour lui-même de le sentir plus fort, le secourant, se dévouant; tandis que Jean, sans analyser sa sensation, goûtait une joie à protéger chez son ami cette grâce, cette intelligence, restées en lui rudimentaires. Depuis la mort violente de sa femme, emportée dans un affreux drame, il se croyait sans cœur, il avait juré de ne plus jamais en voir, de ces créatures dont on souffre tant, même quand elles ne sont pas mauvaises. Et l'amitié leur devenait à tous deux comme un élargissement: on avait beau ne pas s'embrasser, on se touchait à fond, on était l'un dans l'autre, si différent que l'on fût, sur cette terrible route de Remilly, l'un soutenant l'autre, ne faisant plus qu'un être de pitié et de souffrance. (*RM* 5, 152)<sup>36</sup>

Is this primary, pre-cultural friendship a mere wishful fiction? Can we find a biological basis for this biological or anthropological mutual aid that goes beyond gender and sex, beyond education and class antagonism? One may rightly doubt so, and Zola's boastful claim to the scientific foundation of his natural and social narratives seems to request such a confirmation. However, what *Les Rougon-Macquart* also performs as a literary text is that it invents such fictional stories about our biological possibilities and potentialities, as if they were truly our alternatives and essences. And where does their justification come from? It would not necessarily be found in scientific evidence but rather in literary persuasion which places the reader simultaneously in the position of believer and critic: Zola's historical novels and his faith in science remind us that his narratives might be (merely) a fiction, always with conjectures and question marks; however, those signs of disbelief should be seen as vigilance and invitation, as an open and welcoming encouragement to break with closure and finitude, and move toward more hopeful, more wishful lives that we can invent and work on infinitely, aesthetically, and ethically. And this literary falsehood, which may or may not become scientific, might be the truly political and utopian possibility of Zola's naturalism.

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<sup>36</sup> I take this notion of as-if from Hans Vaihinger. See *The Philosophy of "As If": A System of the Theoretical, Practical, and Religious Fictions of Mankind*, trans. C. K. Ogden (Abingdon, Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2009).